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Proposal for Mandatory Minimum Public Water Supply Protection Zoning

Who: ~950 Community and Non-Community Non-Transient Wells (324 Community Systems and 370 NTNC systems).

Where:

1. Primary protection zone 300 feet for most, 200 day travel time for large community sand and gravel wells)
2. Secondary protection zone: population based calculated radius circle (often also 300 feet) or modeled area for larger bedrock and sand and gravel wells.
3. Total area of both zones is 0.35% of an average town. 2/3 of towns with more than 1% land coverage already have ordinances.

What:

1. No new septic systems or toxic chemical use in the primary zone. Existing activities will apply best management practices to reduce the risk of contamination. Activities required for operation and maintenance of the public water supply are permitted.
2. New development will be reviewed for risk potential, approvals conditioned on implementation of best management practices.
3. Both Public Water Suppliers and municipalities may inspect existing activities under current law.

How: Program would be administered similarly to shoreland zoning. Municipality must adopt state minimums, or may be more protective. If the municipality fails to adopt state standards in 3 years, DEP will prescribe zoning for these areas.

Other provisions for consideration:

1. Areas within 1,000 feet of the intakes of public surface water supplies may be zoned resource protection based on proximity to the intake.
2. Public water supplies are declared a protected natural resource under NRPA
3. Protection of current and future public water supplies (both surface and groundwater) is legislated as a state priority (recommendation 1, expanded)